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**HUNTINGTON MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO FEDERAL FIREARMS CHARGE**

HUNTINGTON, W.Va. – Jeremy Joseph Midkiff, 28, of Huntington, pleaded guilty yesterday before United States District Judge Robert C. Chambers on federal gun charges. On June 9, 2009, Midkiff admitted to being a passenger in a vehicle that was stopped by an officer with the Huntington Police Department. During the traffic stop, a Huntington Police detective observed and recovered a .22 caliber semi-automatic pistol with an obliterated serial number, along with an extra magazine of ammunition, from the floorboard beneath the passenger seat of the vehicle. Midkiff further admitted to handling and attempting to sell the firearm prior to the days leading up to the June 4 traffic stop. The defendant had previously been convicted of felonious burglary in Lawrence County, Ohio, on or about October 22, 2002 and did not have a right to possess a firearm.

Midkiff faces up to 10 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine when he is sentenced on July 5, 2011.

The Huntington Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives conducted the investigation. Assistant United States Attorney Josh Hanks is in charge of the prosecution.

This case is being brought as part of Project Safe Neighborhoods. Project Safe Neighborhoods is a nationwide commitment to reduce gun crime in the United States by networking existing local programs targeting gun crime. The United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of West Virginia established "Hard Time for Gun Crime," which is a community-based initiative in conjunction with Project Safe Neighborhoods to reduce and prevent gun violence throughout southern West Virginia. "Hard Time for Gun Crime" is a partnership that includes the cooperation of neighborhood associations, social service and law enforcement agencies.

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